

Hebrews Chapter 3

by Chip Brogden

The book of Hebrews emphasizes the preeminence of Jesus over the Old Covenant and encourages Jewish Christians to remain faithful to Christ.

Duration: 30:03

Scripture: Hebrews 3:1, Hebrews 3:7-13

Topics: "Expositional"

Description

In this video, Chip Brogden continues his series on the book of Hebrews, specifically focusing on chapter 3. He highlights the danger of rebelling against the new covenant that God has established, drawing parallels to the rebellion of the Israelites in the wilderness. Paul's warning in verse 12 to beware of having an evil heart of unbelief and departing from the living God is emphasized. The importance of exhorting one another daily and not being hardened by the deceitfulness of sin is also emphasized. The video concludes with a reminder to enter into the rest that God has provided and not repeat the mistakes of the ancestors who rejected it and perished in the wilderness.

Transcript

This is the day that the Lord has made. I will rejoice and be glad in it. Hello again everyone, this is Chip Brogden coming to you with another edition of our weekly webcast.

I'm streaming online at www.watchman.net and we're continuing in our series of messages on the book of Hebrews. This week we're in Hebrews chapter 3, so if you'd grab your Bible and turn to Hebrews chapter 3 and verse 1, we'll get right into the message. It's hard to believe that we are already in the fourth message of Hebrews.

We had an introduction and then chapter 1 and 2 and now we're in message number 4 of this series, which is Hebrews chapter 3. What a powerful book this is and we are just getting started in this book of Hebrews. Let's go back and revisit what it is we're learning in Hebrews and the purpose of Hebrews. Hebrews was written, we believe, by the Apostle Paul to encourage Jewish Christians not to return to Judaism, but to remain faithful to Christ.

And Jesus is presented here as three things that we want to look at. Number one, our High Priest. Jesus as the High Priest.

Number two, Jesus as our final sacrifice. And number three, Jesus as the mediator of a new covenant. And these three identities and roles of Christ are very well described and established in the book of Hebrews.

You do need a bit of understanding about the Old Testament, the Old Covenant, the Mosaic Law, and the rituals and the ceremonies of the Old Testament, of Judaism, to be able to really appreciate the value of Christ being a High Priest, Christ being our final sacrifice, Christ being the mediator of a new covenant. Hebrews does a lot of comparisons between the New Covenant and the Old Covenant, between Jesus and Moses, between the High Priest of our covenant versus the High Priest of the Old Covenant. So you do need a basic general understanding of Judaism and the Old Covenant and the Old Testament, because most people that are listening to this, myself included, we didn't grow up as Jews.

This letter was written to Jews who understood the things that we have to go back and study and just learn on our own. They grew up in an environment that was Jewish, that was dedicated to the Law of Moses. So just for example, if you were writing a letter to Americans, and you said in that letter that the National Anthem was sung, you wouldn't feel like that you had to write out the words to the National Anthem, because an American knows the words to the National Anthem.

In a similar manner, the letter to Hebrews, or the letter to the Hebrews, was written to Jews who understood the Old Covenant and understood Moses, and so there's not a lot of explanation, a lot of information in Hebrews is taken for granted, because it was written to Jews. So if you have a Jewish background and some understanding of Jewish customs and rituals and the Old Covenant, then you can be on the same page in understanding it more out of Hebrews than someone who has no idea and no basis for understanding and interpreting the Old Testament. Now, I'm not going to try to teach this from a Jewish perspective, but what I will do is take the basic underlying foundational principles that Hebrews is referring to and try to demonstrate from the Old Testament what it's talking about, but most of all, to help you make the connection between the Old Covenant and the New Covenant and to demonstrate the preeminence of Jesus over the Old.

The preeminence of our High Priest today, Jesus Christ, versus the High Priest of the Old Covenant. The preeminence of this final sacrifice of Jesus on the cross versus the many sacrifices covered and commanded and instituted in the Old Testament. I want to show you the preeminence of Jesus as the mediator of a New Covenant, which, as Hebrews says, is established upon better promises versus the covenant of the Old Testament that came through Moses.

And so, that's the purpose of Hebrews. So, as we continue to read, it would be good for you to read over this several times, maybe listen to this several times. If you've got a Bible handbook or a Bible dictionary, they can really be helpful to you to kind of get a basic understanding of the Old Testament ceremonies and laws and feasts, and that will help you to even appreciate more what Hebrews has to tell us and what it's showing us about Jesus.

So, that brings you up to date. If you've not listened to the first several messages that we've done on Hebrews, they're right there on the website. I encourage you to go back to the beginning and listen to the introduction as well as chapters 1 and chapters 2 to get you up to date to where we are this week, which is Hebrews chapter 3. So, as we begin, let's go to the Lord in prayer and ask Him to bless the time that we have together in the study of His Word.

Father, I thank you again for the privilege of coming together by way of the Internet to study your Word and to hear what the Spirit is saying to the churches. I thank you for this letter to the Hebrews called the Book of Hebrews in our Bible that gives us some inclination and some revelation and some wisdom and understanding concerning the preeminence and the magnificence of Christ and His ascendancy and His supremacy over all things, including the Old Covenant and the Old Testament. I thank you.

He's our High Priest. He is our final sacrifice. He is the mediator of a New Covenant.

And I thank you, Lord, that we're saved by grace in this New Covenant, called to be sons and daughters of the Most High God. I thank you for those who are listening. I pray, Father, that you would give us ears to hear, that you would soften our hearts and soften our attitudes and our mind and our preconceived ideas so that we can receive Spirit and truth and see a 30-, 60-, and 100-fold return in our life as we seek to glorify Jesus and point people to Christ.

And I thank you that this Book of Hebrews tells us how we can be made free from religion, free from the law, free from the curse of the law, and can be set free in Jesus' name. So, thank you again, Lord, for your Word. And I pray that it would be a blessing to all that are listening in Jesus' name.

Amen and amen. So, Hebrews 3, beginning in verse 1, it says, Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our confession, Christ Jesus. Now, I told you that Hebrews does a lot of comparisons.

It will say, here's the way it used to be, but now look at how it is today and make the comparison here, what Paul is trying to do. And again, we believe Paul wrote this letter because of the depth of the Revelation as well as the understanding of the Old Covenant. I just don't see that combination happening in very many people in the New Testament outside of the Apostle Paul.

So, we believe it's Paul who wrote this. Some of the arguments are the same, but obviously, he's writing to Jews, whereas all his other letters are written to Gentiles. And so, he's going to write it a little bit different, and perhaps we suggested he wrote it anonymously as well.

So, therefore, he says, Holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our confession, Christ Jesus, who was faithful to Him who appointed Him, as Moses also was faithful in all his house. Now, see, we're not suggesting that there was something wrong with Moses, that there was something lacking in Moses or something impure or unholy about the law. The law and Moses and the Old Covenant served God's purpose and the season for which it was given.

What we have to understand, folks, is that God works according to a season. He works according to His own time, according to His own season. Ecclesiastes, it says that there is a time and a season for everything under the sun.

And so, the law served a purpose. That purpose is clearly delineated. It's clearly explained throughout the Old and the New Testament that the purpose of the law was to point us to Christ.

It was to give us a type and a shadow and a representation and a metaphor and an illustration and a parable of what this New Covenant would be like. And Paul says in Galatians that the purpose of the Old Testament was to basically keep us and prepare us and lead us to Christ. Now, unfortunately, it's not that easy for people to make a change.

It's not easy for them to realize that God works according to a season. And so, they miss all the prophetic significance of what was happening in the Old Covenant. And many of them, because of that, they fail to recognize Jesus Christ.

They fail to appreciate that the Son of God Himself had come to mediate a new covenant and establish a new testament, a new agreement, a new covenant with His people that exceeded the Old Covenant. It exceeded the law of Moses. And even today, people really do not appreciate the depth and the height and the width and the length and the breadth of what Christ has done.

And I know they don't appreciate it because they continually go back to the Old Covenant. And I'm speaking specifically to people that I encounter on the Internet and otherwise in places that we go and visit who are really stuck. That's the best word I could find to describe it.

They're really stuck on this Messianic Jewish Christian cult, if you will. And what I mean by that is they feel like that we have some obligation to go back and study the Old Covenant not just for purposes or not for purposes of leading us deeper into Christ and really appreciating this new covenant, but under some obligation that they feel like we have to obey the feasts, to obey the holy days, to obey the laws and the commandments in the Old Covenant. And again, I'm not going to go back and rehash that entire teaching.

I think we covered that pretty well in Galatians. But my point is they have done the same thing that the Pharisees in the New Testament did. They took the commandment.

They took the law of God and they do apply it in a legalistic fashion in a means that brings people into bondage instead of leading them to Christ which is going to set them free. That's the entire problem with the Galatians. They came to the Lord.

They came to Jesus Christ. And then the Jews who believed came to them and said that since now they believe in Jesus, they also need to go back and submit themselves to the Old Covenant laws and teachings, the Old Covenant holidays and holy days and festivals and circumcision was the main thing. But Paul makes the point if you're going to do one, you're obligated to all of them.

So this is not a new problem. It's not something that is particular to our generation or particular just to this millennium. But it's a problem from day number one in the history of the church.

As soon as they received the grace of God and were saved by Christ Jesus, they tried to take the things of Jesus and apply them to the rest of the world in a Jewish way. And that's why in the book of Acts, it took persecution to get them finally to stop preaching the gospel to the Jews only and begin starting with Antioch to preach the gospel to people who were not Jewish. And then God began to fill Gentiles with the Holy Spirit.

And all of a sudden, they began slowly, ever so slowly, some of them to realize that God's promise and God's gospel was not just for Jewish people, but it was for all the nations, for all the Gentiles. And folks, I am a Gentile. I am not Jewish.

I was not born in Israel. I have no Jewish ancestry. But Paul says, you know, what makes someone a Jew, really, it's not their outward genealogy.

It's not their outward ancestry. It's a spiritual condition. The one who is a true Jew, he says, is circumcised in his heart.

And that's the entire difference between the New Covenant and the Old Covenant. The Old Covenant is primarily trying to legislate and regulate our outward behavior, whereas the New Covenant is Christ coming to live within us, changing us from the inside out, and regulating our behavior from the inside, not from the outside. See, Jesus said, you Pharisees, wash the outside of the cup, but the inside of the cup is full of bitterness.

And that's exactly what you're doing when you try to take people who have the privilege of living under the New Covenant, living in grace, and you teach them that they need to go back and they need to adopt all of these Hebrew customs and traditions and Old Testament, Old Covenant laws, and that just repudiates and voids every benefit that we have under the New Covenant, under Jesus Christ, our High Priest. So what Paul is doing here in Hebrews is he is telling these Jewish people who became Christians, don't throw away your Christianity and go back to Judaism. So how in the world would you say to someone who is not Jewish that they need to go back and obey the Old Testament covenant, start calling God Yahweh, and start calling Jesus Yeshua, and you're straining out a gnat and swallowing a camel as far as I'm concerned, because you are making issues out of words and names, and what do I do on certain days of the week, and Paul said that's all done away with, and now it is a matter of spirit and truth, the Kingdom of God is here, the Kingdom of God lives within you, is within you, and it is all about Jesus.

To go back now and try to bring people into bondage to something that God has called us and delivered us out from, it simply is counterproductive and it runs in opposition to the time and the season that God is administering this New Covenant, which is a New Covenant of Grace. So what Paul is doing here is he's trying to get them to see that what Jesus has done is far greater, far more encompassing, far more profound, far more life-changing than everything that Moses did and everything that the Old Covenant represents. So going back here to verse 2, it says that Jesus was faithful to him who appointed him, as Moses also was faithful in all his house.

Verse 3, for this one, Jesus, has been counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as he who built the house has more honor than the house. Listen to this, folks. This one, this Jesus, has been counted worthy of more glory than Moses.

I wish I could shout that from the housetops to these people who insist that we go back and we become Jews all over again, or people who are Gentiles that they need to begin to adopt Jewish tradition, Jewish custom, Old Covenant ways, Old Covenant language. Those things are types and shadows and symbols and prophetic signs of what God was and is and has accomplished in Jesus Christ. And Paul says this one, Jesus, is counted worthy of more glory than Moses.

More glory than Moses. Now, verse 4, for every house is built by someone, but he who built all things is God, and Moses indeed was faithful in all his house as a servant, for a testimony of those things which would be spoken afterward. See, you go back and you recall when Moses first got with God there on the mountain, and God said, Be careful that everything you do, you make it and you establish it according to the pattern that I will show you.

And it's beyond the scope of this teaching to go back and show you all of the types and shadows in the Old Testament and how they all point to Christ, but every little detail, every little ingredient, every feast, every holy day, every sacrifice, they all point in some manner to Jesus Christ. Now, I don't have a problem studying those things as long as you make the connection to Christ, because that is exactly why those things were established to begin with. It says right here that Moses was faithful in all his house as a

servant, for a testimony of those things which would be spoken afterward.

What things? The things concerning Jesus Christ. The things concerning the new covenant, the high priest, the final sacrifice, and the mediator of this new covenant. All those things, Paul says, were types and shadows designed to lead us to Christ and to reveal something of Christ.

And if we don't make that connection back to Jesus, then we're going to get distracted, and frankly, we're just going to get religious, we're going to get hypocritical, we're going to bring ourselves into legalism, and we're going to bring other people into bondage. That's exactly what happened with the Pharisees. That's exactly what is happening today when people attempt to go back and apply Old Covenant truths, Old Covenant commandments, Old Covenant laws, and Old Covenant ceremonies, Old Covenant festivals, Old Covenant language.

They try to apply that to life today when we're in a new season under a new covenant that's established upon better promises. So, Moses indeed was faithful in all his house as a servant, for a testimony of those things which would be spoken afterward. But Christ, as a son over his own house, whose house we are, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm to the end.

Now, get this. Moses built a tabernacle, a tent in the wilderness, where the presence of God dwelt. Now, Paul says that Christ is not a servant but a son over his own house, whose house we are.

Praise the Lord. See, this church that Jesus is building, this house that he is building, it is a house of living stones, and it is made out of people. It's not a temple made with hands.

It's not a temple of stones. It's not a building that we can look at and point to and raise up and build. It is a house of living stones, and Christ is a son over his own house.

Moses was a servant over the tabernacle, the outward representation of what Jesus would do. Now, Jesus, he says, I will build my church and the gates of hell will not prevail against it, and it is this house, Paul says, we are that house. He says to the Corinthians, know you not that you are the temple of the Holy Ghost, the temple of the living God, and that God lives in you.

See, you are the temple. You are the tabernacle. In fact, I went back and I read an Aramaic translation of that.

Do you know how they translate that in the Hebrew and going back into Aramaic? They translate that as the Holy of Holies. You are the Holy of Holies, and God lives in you. That's just powerful, folks.

That just blows your mind when you understand the significance of what Jesus has done. And what he has done is he has gone so far and beyond anything that Moses had. For one thing, the Holy Spirit didn't live inside of anyone in the Old Covenant.

The Holy Spirit came upon people, but there was not an opportunity to have God living on the inside of a person. You had to go to the temple or you had to go to the tabernacle to see or to experience the manifest presence of God. But now Paul says, don't you know that with this new covenant, this new high priest, this sacrifice that he has made, you are the Holy of Holies and God lives in you.

That is a powerful thing, folks, and we just don't appreciate it. And if we really see that, we will not go back to the Old Covenant. The Old Covenant was a shadow, it was a type, and it was a prophetic sign of what

God was going to do on a grand scale.

And now he has done it, and it's available to us if only we will be faithful. And that's why, as you continue reading in verse 7, we're coming to a section now where he is beginning to warn us. Therefore, as the Holy Spirit says, verse 7, and now he's warning people.

Remember, who is he writing to? He is writing to Christian people who used to be Jews, and now they're being tempted to give up their Christianity and go back to Judaism. Plain and simple. Therefore, as the Holy Spirit says, today if you will hear his voice, do not harden your hearts, as in the rebellion, in the day of trial in the wilderness, where your fathers tested me, tried me, and saw my works forty years.

Therefore, I was angry with that generation, and said, they always go astray in their heart, and they have not known my ways. So I swore in my wrath, they shall not enter my rest. Now, folks, it's interesting that from the time that Jesus was crucified to the destruction of Jerusalem was approximately forty years.

So, the time that this letter was written, there was only a few years remaining up until the time when Titus, the Roman conqueror, the Roman general, came, destroyed Jerusalem, and destroyed the temple. That's coming in the not too distant future after this letter to the Hebrews was written. So, I think it's significant that there's forty years difference, a space of forty years, I should say, between the time when Christ was crucified and the destruction of Jerusalem.

Approximately, okay? Approximately forty years. But regardless, the point is that just as the people in the wilderness rebelled against the Holy Spirit in the same way the Jews were in danger of rebelling against this new covenant that God had established. History repeating itself all over again, and one thing that man learns from history is that we don't learn anything from history.

We don't learn, and so Paul is trying to warn us. He's trying to say, verse twelve, Beware, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God. Verse thirteen, But exhort one another daily while it is called today, lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.

Verse fourteen, We have become partakers of Christ if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast to the end. See? If we hold. If we hold.

And, you know, when I teach this new covenant and I talk about grace and how we've been saved and delivered from the curse of the law, a lot of champions of the law and of Judaism, Messianic Christianity, Messianic Judaism, they will come back and say that, you know, you teach people grace and you're giving them a license to sin. And it's almost as if they think that by teaching the new covenant the way I'm teaching it, that I'm somehow lowering the standards. But I want you to understand, folks, the new covenant has not lowered God's standards at all.

It has not lowered anything. If anything, it has raised God's standards. The new covenant raises the standard and it goes well beyond anything the old covenant raised up as a standard.

The difference is it's focused on the inward condition, not the outward condition. That's why you read in the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus is saying, Now you heard that it has been said to them of old, Don't lust. But I say, see, but I say, but I say, and every time he did that, it says, And you heard that it was told to them in times past that you're to love your neighbor and hate your enemy.

But I say, but I say, love your enemies. See, Jesus raised the standard and he goes beyond. He's worthy of more glory than Moses because he is trying to get us changed from the inside out.

Whereas the only thing the law and the old covenant could do was regulate people's behavior. But how many of you know you can regulate your outward behavior and still be unsubmitted on the inside? I could lose my temper with someone, but because I'm able to control myself, I could smile and I could say, Well, bless you, brother. And I love you anyway.

And hallelujah. And I could look real spiritual on the outside, but on the inside, I could be boiling over with rage. And if you're honest, you come across situations like that all the time.

We can prevent ourselves. Most of us have learned to control ourselves outwardly. That's what the law did.

But it takes something supernatural on the inside of a person to change them from the inside. Law on the outside will never do that. Law will only regulate the outward behavior.

It will never change the inside of the person. So when we're talking about the new covenant, we're talking about grace. We're not talking about relaxing God's standards.

We're not talking about live any way that you want to live. If anything, those standards have been raised because now it is simply out of the question for us to behave ourselves outwardly. There has to be something changed on the inside of us.

And that's why God is saying that one day I will take away your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. And my commandments won't be written on stone, but they will be written on the inside of you. I'll put my spirit in you and not just keep it in a temple someplace.

That is the new covenant in a nutshell. And that's why Paul is warning. Don't harden your hearts.

Don't rebel. Enter into that rest that God has provided and don't be like your ancestors who rejected it and died out there in the wilderness. So that's a warning that we all need to take to heart and apply that to ourselves as well.

So praise the Lord. I'm all out of time for this week, but we'll pick up again here next week. This is Chip Brogdon streaming online at www.watchman.net. Thank you so much for listening and we'll see you next time.

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